

1280210

Registered provider: First Blue Healthcare Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately operated children's home is registered to provide up to two placements to young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties, on a medium- to long-term basis. It provides care for children and young people of both sexes aged between eight and 17 years with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Inspection dates: 20 to 21 February 2019

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: not applicable

Overall judgement at last inspection: not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

This is the home's first inspection since registration in August 2018.

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person(s) must take to meet the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards'. The registered person(s) must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child; help each child to understand how to keep safe; have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; and that the premises used for the purposes of the home are located so that children are effectively safeguarded. (Regulation 12 (1)(2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(c))	01/04/2019
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that helps children aspire to fulfil their potential and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose; ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the	01/04/2019

home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home; and

use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home.
(Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b)(2)(a)(b)(c)(d)(e)(g)(h))

Recommendations

- Where children placed in a home are not participating in education because they have been excluded or are not on a school roll for some other reason, the registered person and staff must work closely with the placing authority so that the child is supported and enabled to resume full-time education as soon as possible. In the interim, the child should be supported to sustain or regain their confidence in education and be engaged in suitable structured activities. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 28, paragraph 5.15)
- Staff should be familiar with the home's policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)
- For children's homes to be nurturing and supportive environments that meet the needs of their children, they will, in most cases, be homely, domestic environments. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

This is the home's first inspection since registration in August 2018. Since this time, one young person has been admitted to the home. The young person is cared for by a consistent staff team. The young person's social worker has praised the staff team for its commitment and for enabling a period of stability for the young person, who has experienced a significant number of previous placement breakdowns. However, she has continued to display challenging behaviours and has caused considerable damage to the house.

The staff team supports the young person to gain skills for independent living. The staff also help her to get support for her emotional well-being. This means that the young person is making progress in these areas from her starting point.

Despite staff support, the young person is not in education or training and is not yet making progress in her learning. Staff have not escalated their concerns quickly enough over delays in securing the young person with a school placement with her social worker and the virtual school headteacher. The young person is also not meeting the requirements of a court order by attending meeting with her youth offending officer on a regular basis. Again, staff are not doing enough to help the young person to understand how important these meetings are for her future.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

Managers ensure that staff working at the home are safely recruited. This helps to ensure that the young person is looked after by suitable adults.

Despite staff trying hard to keep the young person safe, their behaviour management approach is weak overall. For instance, staff do not complete behaviour management plans with clear strategies to deal with the young person's complex behaviour. For example, staff do not relate the use of rewards to improving the young person's behaviour. The young person is also not supported by staff to have clear boundaries and consistent routines. Furthermore, although staff complete incident logs, they do not learn from these incidents. As a result, staff do not understand the triggers for the young person's behaviour or know how to respond to her with consistency.

Some incidents result in significant damage to the house. For example, the young person has caused considerable damage to her bathroom. As a result of causing damage to furniture, the young person no longer has storage for her clothing. The young person has also spent time sleeping on a mattress on the floor. This is due to her reluctance to allow some staff members to enter her bedroom to let them assemble a new bed.

Staff have not completed assessments to address risks to the young person from going missing from care and from accessing social media online. One risk assessment relating to a day trip for the young person is missing basic information. The home's location risk assessment does not contain relevant local information. This means that staff do not always have all the information that they need to keep the young person safe.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The registered manager and the deputy manager have an appropriate management qualification. One member of staff has a level 3 diploma in residential childcare. All remaining staff are enrolled and working towards the award.

Leaders and managers have not ensured that all staff have received all necessary training that helps them to understand the impact of the young person's complex needs. As a result, staff are not always aware of how to support the young person.

In recent months, the registered manager has focused her time on providing day-to-day

support for the young person and staff. This has had an impact on her time to be able to monitor and review the young person's progress and to recognise areas for improvement in the quality of care. Consequently, the registered manager does not have a plan in place for improving the quality of care for the young person.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

Using the 'Social care common inspection framework', this inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service, how it meets the core functions of the service as set out in legislation, and to consider how well it complies with the Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards'.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 1280210

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: First Blue Healthcare Limited

Registered provider address: Eagles Nest, Dunston Business Village, Dunston
ST18 9AB

Responsible individual: Elizabeth Nixon

Registered manager: Moira Kennedy

Inspector

Karen Gillingwater: social care inspector

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